





## LIFE OF F. P. SARGENT, GRAND MASTER.

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**T**HOSE familiar with biographical history are aware that circumstances are potent factors in giving men distinction and prominence in human affairs, and this is specially true in the United States, where men in the humbler walks of life, in multiplied instances, achieve eminence. But it must not be overlooked that the youth, from the farm and shop, whose *alma mater* is the district school, "in advancing to the front" in the armies of progress, always possesses in a greater or less degree inherent qualities, without which obscurity, in spite of circumstances or occasions, is an irrevocable verdict.

FRANK P. SARGENT, the subject of this sketch, is a native of Vermont, the Green Mountain State, where he was born November 18, 1851, and is therefore in the thirty-seventh year of his age. The place of his birth and his boyhood home, at East Orange, Orange County, is justly celebrated for its mountain scenery, hills and valleys, its babbling brooks, foaming streams and numerous cascades, miniature Niagaras. In no part of the broad land are homes more attractive, and Vermont, whose star was the first to flash upon the blue field of our flag, after the Union was formed, has kept well abreast of other New England States in peopling the great West with her hardy sons. It was amidst such scenes of natural beauty that Frank passed his infancy and young boyhood. He angled for trout; he slid down hill; he was in the front rank of the snow-ball brigade; was vigorous in attack and discreet in retreat; and in his callow days exhibited those traits of leadership and self reliance which later in life have borne rich fruit.

His education was obtained at the district school, where he graduated at seventeen. He had mastered the three R's, Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmetic, and was ready for the battles of life. Those at all familiar with New England rural life know the winters are set apart for schooling, and the vernal and summer months are devoted to hard work to make an unprolific soil cheer the hearts of farmers with small dividends for the investment of toil and sweat. All these lessons young Sargent had learned by the time he was seventeen years of age. At that time came the first departure. He left the old home—

“The orchard, the meadow, the deep-tangled wildwood,  
And every lov'd object his infancy knew,”

To try his fortunes at Manchester, N. H., where he had been apprenticed to learn the art of photography. This he mastered in all of its details, and practiced it in Manchester, Philadelphia, and Haverhill, Massachusetts, until 1879, when, his health failing, he was advised to regain it by visiting the salubrious, health-giving climate of Arizona. To accomplish this, the extremely practical idea suggested itself to combine equestrian exercise with the exploration for health-giving altitudes, longitudes and latitudes, and our hero enlisted in the United States Cavalry, and in 1880 was at Fort Apache, Arizona, under the command of Captain E. C. Hentig; and in the summer of that year was engaged in Arizona and Mexico in following the famous Victoria band of Apaches, and in an engagement at Cibicue, near the Apache reservation, Captain Hentig was killed.

In this way Mr. Sargent fought for health and for his country in the same campaign, and upon his return to Fort Apache, in the month of November, with health fully restored and the Apaches reduced to obedience, he made application for an honorable discharge from the service, which was granted November 11, 1880.

From Fort Apache Mr. Sargent went to Tucson, Arizona, and began service as a railroad employé December 1, 1880, on the Southern Pacific, his position being that of a wiper. In this position he served three months, when he was promoted to the position of fireman on a construction train, and from this position to a fireman in the road service. It will be observed that promotions followed in quick succession, an evidence that the new railroad employé had determined to master the business, and that his employers saw in their man a disposition to work and climb.

Mr. Sargent took an early and active interest in the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen. He saw its purposes were good and that its possibilities were of far-reaching importance, and on the 20th day of October, 1881, just eleven months and nineteen days from the time he began service as a railroad employé, he was initiated into the Brother-

hood—not in a hall blazing with light, but in a coal bin at Tucson. From the first Mr. Sargent took an active part in the affairs of the Order. As a member of Cactus Lodge, No. 94, he became its Financier, and made the Lodge conspicuous in the Brotherhood for a splendid financial record, than which nothing so distinguishes a lodge. His active and intelligent participancy in the affairs of his Lodge and of the Order made him a delegate to the Terre Haute convention of the Order in 1882, in which he exhibited exceptional qualifications in the deliberations and policy of the Brotherhood, and at the convention in Denver, where he was again a delegate, he was elected Vice Grand Master of the Brotherhood. From the first Mr. Sargent's course was distinguished by great prudence and a capacity for sound advice, which pointed him out as the coming man of the Brotherhood, and in 1885, at the Philadelphia Convention, the great Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen gave evidence of its wisdom and its appreciation of merit by electing him Grand Master, the highest office of the Brotherhood.

In doing this, no mistake was made. Since the date of Mr. Sargent's election as Grand Master the Brotherhood has prospered; it has grown in numerical and moral power. Without factions, the beauty and blessings of harmony prevail throughout the entire jurisdiction; and this is all the more notable, as, during the current year, 1888, the Brotherhood has been put to a crucial test such as it never before experienced, a test which demanded of its Grand Master, in an unusual degree, every quality of head and heart which most pre-eminently distinguish a leader—prudence, wisdom, courage, self-poise and self-reliance, and, withal, a tenacity of purpose that knows no variable-ness nor shadow of turning.

In reviewing the subject, we see the New England boy, at seventeen years of age, entering upon the duties of life, an apprentice exhibiting from the first a sturdy purpose to win. With health impaired, he seeks the Far West; fights Indians, regains his health, and begins again at the bottom round of employment; finds rapid promotion as a reward of merit; allies himself with a brotherhood of railroad employes, takes a profound interest in its ambition and its policy, and in four short years advances from the humble position of wiper to that of Grand Master of 384 lodges, and a membership of 20,000. Mr. Sargent is now in the very prime of young manhood, and does not look as though he would ever again have to go in search of health, for, with an avoirdupois of two hundred pounds, he may snap his fingers in the faces of malaria or other disease-provoking agencies. Happy in his domestic relations, with a home embellished by all that can win and hold manly men to the moorings of affection, Grand Master Sargent has before him the prospect of a long, happy, and useful life.